

**Patent claims**

1. A method for detecting surroundings by means of an automotive night vision system comprising a number of areas, a detection area wherein the night vision system is sensitive at least to optical radiation in the IR wavelength region and detects data relating to the surroundings, and an area of representation, information from the data relating to the surroundings detected therein being represented optically by means of a display device, characterized in that the area of representation comprises at most the high beam area of the vehicle.

2. The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that an evaluation area is provided within which the data relating to the surroundings detected by means of the night vision system are subjected to evaluation, in particular object recognition.

3. The method as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that a tolerance area adjoins the area of representation.

4. The method as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the area of representation comprises at least a part of the low beam area.

5. The method as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the evaluation area comprises at least the high beam area.

6. The method as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the objects detected by means of the evaluation in the area of representation are emphasized in the optical representation.

7. The method as claimed in one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the information relating to the objects detected during the evaluation in the evaluation area is made available to internal vehicle systems for further evaluation.